

Message Text

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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POPULATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

REFERENCE: A) STATE 112325

B) AMMAN TOAID A-172 DATED 12/20/72

C) AMMAN TOAID A-107 DATED 7/23/72

1. WE REGRET THE DELAY IN RESPONDING TO REFTEL. THE PREPARATIONS FOR

THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT SIMPLY PRECLUDED A MORE TIMELY RESPONSE. REFS B&C DESCRIBE RATHER WELL THE GOJ POSITION AS OF TWO YEARS AGO, AND PROVIDE SOME INFORMATION PERTINENT TO QUESTIONS POSED IN REF A. WE ALSO HAVE SENT A COPY OF THE FINAL "REPORT OF THE SEMINAR ON POPULATION POLICY" FOR YOUR REVIEW. THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES A UN SPONSORED CONFERENCE HELD IN DECEMBER OF 1972.

2. IN 1972 THE MISSION FULLY EXPECTED A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN FAMILY PLANNING (SEE P. 9 REF C). IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOJ OCCURED BUT IT BECAME CLEAR THAT NO ONE WAS PREPARED TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OFFICIALLY SUBMITTING THE REQUEST AND NOTHING CAME OF IT.

3. RECENTLY THERE ALSO WAS TALK OF SIMPLY SENDING A FEW PERSONS TO THE U.S. FOR TRAINING. THIS TOO PROVED IMPOSSIBLE. WHILE MANY OFFICIALS RECOGNIZE POPULATION GROWTH AS A PROBLEM THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT SEEMS NO MORE WILLING THAN IN THE PAST

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TO MOVE ON THIS ISSUE. FAMILY PLANNING IS A SENSITIVE ISSUE

HERE UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THE UNCERTAINTIES FOR JORDAN OF A POSSIBLE MID-EAST SETTLEMENT MAKE IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE AN OFFICIAL POSITION ON THIS MATTER.

4. FURTHER, THE GAPS IN AVAILABLE INFORMATION LIMIT OUR ABILITY TO RESPOND DEFINITELY TO SOME OF THE POINTS RAISED IN REF A. CENSUS DATA IS WOEFULLY OUT OF DATE WITH NO PLANS TO UPDATE IT UNTIL AFTER THE STATUS OF THE WEST BANK IS RESOLVED. IN PART DUE TO THE PAUCITY OF SUCH DATA THERE ALSO HAS BEEN NO SERIOUS ATTEMPT BY THE GOJ TO STUDY THE ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ITS POPULATION GROWTH RATE, ESTIMATED OFFICIALLY AT 3.2 PERCENT SINCE THE IMPLICATIONS OF PEACE SETTLEMENT ARE OVERRIDING TO JORDAN'S FUTURE IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE ITS DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS. WE ARE REASONABLY OPTIMISTIC HOWEVER THAT THE EAST AND WEST BANK TOGETHER COULD ACHIEVE A VERY RESPECTABLE PACE OF DEVELOPMENT - PERHAPS GROWING AT 6 TO 8 PERCENT IN REAL TERMS - UNDER PEACEFUL CONDITIONS IN THE REGION. SUCH A RATE POTENTIALLY COULD CREATE UP TO 300,000 NEW JOBS IN A TEN YEAR PERIOD, AND RESULTING IN AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 5 PERCENT TO 10 PERCENT IN THE MID 1980'S ASSUMING A GROWTH RATE IN POPULATION OF 3.2 PERCENT AND NO INCREASE IN THE LABOR PARTICIPATION RATE, ESTIMATED AT ONLY 22 PERCENT. THESE FIGURES ALSO ABSTRACT FROM ANY FURTHER INFLUX OF REFUGEES TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS. THIS DEVELOPMENT PACE WOULD REQUIRE ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. AND OTHER DONORS ROUGHLY AT CURRENT LEVELS FOR MUCH OF THIS 10 YEAR PERIOD. SHOULD A SETTLEMENT BE REACHED HOWEVER WE WOULD HOPE TO SHIFT FROM BUDGET SUPPORT TO OTHER MORE DEVELOPMENTAL FORMS OF ASSISTANCE. THE PROSPECTS FOR MINERALS; & TOURISM LOOK VERY PROMISING FROM A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS STANDPOINT ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT UNTIL WELL INTO THE 1980'S.

5. A POTENTIAL EXISTS TO DOUBLE WHEAT PRODUCTION IN JORDAN AND WE CAN EXPECT SOME PROGRESS TOWARD THIS GOAL. NEVERTHELESS WITH SUCH WIDE VARIATIONS IN RAINFALL THERE PROBABLY WILL BE A REQUIREMENT FOR TITLE I WHEAT IN TOW OUT OF EVERY 3 TO 4 YEAR PERIOD FOR THE NEXT DECADE, ALTHOUGH THE AVERAGE REQUIREMENT SHOULD DECLINE SOMEWHAT.

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6. A SPECIAL PARTICULARITY OF JORDANIAN POPULATION IS THE 800,000 PALESTINIAN REFUGEE POPULATION, OF WHOM 209,000 LIVE IN UNRWA REFUGEE CAMPS AND OVER 500,00 ARE BENEFICIARIES OF UNRWA RATIONS, EDUCATION OR MEDICAL SERVICES. DESPITE THE LACK OF AN UNRWA CENSUS SINCE 1961, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE CONDITIONS OF REFUGEE LIFE SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNRWA CAMPS HAVE GIVEN RISE TO A SOMEWHAT FASTER BIRTH RATE THAN ELSEWHERE IN JORDAN, ALTHOUGH THE RATE HAS PROBABLY DECLINED IN

RECNET YEARS. THE GOJ DOES NOT PERMIT UNRWA TO HAVE A BIRTH CONTROL PROGRAM. HOWEVER IN PRACTICE PRIVATE CLINICS GIVE ADVICE WHEN SUCH IS SOUGHT BY PATIENTS AND THIS PRACTICE IS BECOMINGLY INCREASINGLY WIDESPREAD AMONG THE REFUGEE POPULATION.

7. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OFFAMILY PLANNING WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AND OFFER TO ASSIST WHEREVER WE CAN. AS IN THE PAST WE CAN ENCOURAGE THE EFFORTS OF PRIVATE GROUPS PROVIDING FAMILY PLANNING ASSISTANCE, AND PASS ALONG THE TECHNICAL AND OTHER INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT PERIODICALLY MADE AVAILABLE TO US. BEYOND SUCH EFFORTS HOWEVER WE SEE VERY LITTLE ROLE FOR THE U.S. OR ANY OTHER DONOR IN THE FAMILY PLANNING AREA FOR A LEAST THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS.
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